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FRANK A. MUNSEY.

The Times is served in the city of Washington and District of Columbia by newsboys, who deliver and collect for the paper on their own account at the rate of 5 cents a week for the Evening and 5 cents a copy for the Sunday edition.

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THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 1903.

For 3,335 of Our Neighbors.

These are the persons whose characters may be saved, who may be developed into good citizenship in the Capital of the United States, instead of being relegated to the companionship of law-breakers, and of their lives, if our present medieval penal and correctional methods are improved by a probation and parole system.

Three thousand of the 16,200 persons convicted every year in the District of Columbia.

Thirty-five of the 170 persons committed to the penitentiary every year by the District Supreme Court.

Two hundred of the 554 prisoners now in the jail.

One hundred of the 500 prisoners now in the workhouse.

An unknown number of the District prisoners now in various State penitentiaries.

These figures are estimates, of course. But they are sustained by the experience of California, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, and Vermont. The only danger in the way of this good for these 3,335, and more, of our fellow-creatures, our neighbors of the District of Columbia, is inactivity on the part of Congress.

Fireproof Building Tests.

The disaster in Chelsea, Mass., has prompted an unofficial report on the investigation the Federal Government is making into the comparative fire-resisting values of various kinds of building material. The Government owns buildings worth at least \$500,000,000, and every year spends in the vicinity of \$20,000,000 on new structures here and there. Before the fire the post-office in Chelsea was situated in the Odd Fellows building. In this case the Government loss is comparatively slight; but if fire had swept over a larger city the Government might be a heavy loser, for it does not insure its buildings against loss by fire. It prefers to do what it can to make them fireproof.

The first series of elaborate tests in connection with this policy has just been completed under the direction of the United States Geological Survey, which had the assistance of the National Board of Fire Underwriters and the National Fire Protection Association, the tests being conducted in the Chicago laboratories of the former organization. Thirty panels of divers building material were used—concrete blocks, all sorts of bricks, several kinds of tile, and sandstone, granite, and marble. The tests were severe. The temperature attained, about 1,700 degrees Fahrenheit, was above that of the ordinary blaze, but probably it was not higher than that reached during certain periods of the conflagration at Chelsea. None of the materials passed the trial perfectly, but, nevertheless, the results were promising. The director of the Geological Survey reports:

The brick panels probably withstood the tests better than any other materials. There were two lots of common brick tested, one was an unglazed, recently manufactured brick, and the other a brick that had been in an engine foundation for some years. The latter seemed to withstand the test the better. Fifty per cent of the new bricks were split, while 60 to 70 per cent of the old bricks were not damaged. The bricks at the back of the panel were entirely unaffected.

The hydraulic pressed bricks stood the test better than any other material. No damage was apparent whatever after the firing and before the water was applied, and although a number of the bricks cracked, 20 per cent of them were found to be intact after the quenching of the flames. There was apparently little difference in the strength of the bricks before and after firing.

The natural building stone behaved the worst of all the material tested. The almost complete destruction of these stones, precludes any comparison between them. The sandstone panel entirely collapsed soon after the test was started.

Of the concrete panels, that with a granite basis appears to have done best. However, when drenched after being subjected to the intense heat, this concrete cracked rather badly, suggesting that it would be well to have metal reinforcement.

"The tests," we read, "also brought out most clearly the low rate at which heat travels through concrete. This is one of the desirable qualities in materials intended for fireproofing purposes." In the granite concrete panels a comparatively low temperature was found immediately after the test at a depth of only an inch and a half. Linnen tags placed in the hollow concrete blocks were found undamaged; and it was noticeable that the "wetter, richer mixtures stood out apparently undamaged in contrast

with the damaged faces of the leaner, dryer blocks."

But we notice nothing in the report that will give any assurance or encouragement to the builders of and investors in the wooden shacks that disfigure most of our Washington alleys.

Fifteen Million to One.

Postmaster General Meyer contends for an extension of the American parcels post exclusively to the rural routes chiefly on the ground that it would wipe out the postal deficit. As a proper development of the postal service it ought to receive attention from Congress on that or any other ground urged by the head of the service.

But the extension of the parcels post privilege to reach the patrons of the rural routes has more to commend it—the convenience of the patrons of 39,038 rural routes, a population of 4,000,000 families, comprising 15,000,000 American citizens. The only objection to it as now proposed comes from four corporations doing an express business, and certain railroads and other corporations allied with the express companies. Congress has dawdled away its time until any legislation to be enacted this session must fight for room. But it could pass this legislation for 15,000,000 as easily and in as little time as it gives to a private pension bill affecting only one.

The Troubles in Persia.

Little seems to reach this country concerning the turbulence which for a long time has been engulfing the ancient monarchy of Persia in something very like anarchy. The Shah made a pretense of granting his country a constitution, and called together a parliament. This much the world promptly learned; but of subsequent developments little has been known.

It appears that conditions in Persia are such that today it may fairly be regarded as the world's storm center. Here the Russian, the Turk, and the British are contending for paramountcy of influence, while the unfortunate native comes in for a bit of consideration after these three have composed their differences. The Turks undertook by force to restore order to the bleeding country, in which revolution as big and bloody as that which brought the Terror to Paris would doubtless have occurred before now but for the outside intervention. The Russians have been jealous of the interference of the Turk, and the English, ever with their thoughts on the Persian Gulf and the road to India, have been jealous of both.

In Teheran conditions have at times been almost beyond belief. The Persian Liberals and Progressives have insisted on getting a bit of the substance, along with the shadow of popular government which the Shah conceded to them. Liberal activities have been met with assassination, mysterious imprisonments, unexplained imprisonments. A thrill of horror ran through the whole East a few weeks ago when a great banker and philanthropist of the Persian capital, suspected of financing the Liberal movement, was murdered, with his wife, in his home at night; both were killed in their beds, and the culprits escaped. This is but a sample of the conditions which have prevailed and still continue in Persia.

The ancient monarchy struggles to maintain existence and independence, which perhaps it does not deserve; and yet, if foreign interference could be stopped, there is little doubt that better things would be brought out of the country's chaos. The foreigners all have an eye on Persia—Turkey, Britain, Russia, Germany. They all fear to allow it free hand with its own affairs, simply because each of them knows not how its particular interests would be affected.

Three Months School Buildings.

Eight schools are reported by the Fire Chief as exposing the children to so much risk of fire that without certain comprehensive alterations they should be closed. A choice of action under such circumstances must have been extremely difficult for the Board of Education.

Gauged by its decisive stand as to the sanitary conditions of three certain schools, several weeks ago, its inclination would be to close these eight without a day of delay. But it had to consider in this situation that closing the schools would seriously interrupt the education of 1,778 children and throw out of employment forty-seven teachers at that very time of the year when there was least danger of fire.

No one—least of all a responsible and public-spirited Board of Education—would weigh two months of study against the safety of a child. But at this time of the year, when there are no fires in the buildings, the board judged the danger to be so far lessened as not to counterbalance the value of these last two months of the term. In that de-

cision, The Times believes the board will have the indorsement of parents with children in the schools.

But there is nothing in this act which diminishes the need for new buildings to take the places of these eight which have been condemned, or of radical repairs to make them safe. There are to be no fires in them from now until the end of the term. If the rooms are cold the children are to be dismissed. But there are only three months in the term when such a regulation is at all feasible. From the middle of October to the middle of April it is not safe to count on mild weather. During that whole period, therefore, any authority which compels children to attend school in these buildings—as the board may be expected not to do—would deliberately risk the lives of nearly 2,000 of our youngsters. Resolved to its logical conclusion, that situation means that for seven of the ten months these eight buildings do not exist for school purposes.

The price of prunes has gone up sharply of late, and it is alleged that frosts in California are responsible. This explanation, however, is regarded in highly informed circles as a mere mantle of charity for the politicians who think they are conducting a movement in opposition to Secretary Taft's nomination.

Mr. Calkins told it, but it came mighty close to having all the frosting and decorative effects scraped off.

These reports in the public press about the various utilities of the merry widow have ought to bring conviction that nothing in all the scheme of things is really useless.

"The Vreeland financial plan" is one phrase that requires careful elucidation before one assumes to know its meaning. It may mean the Metropolitan railroad's method of fixing New York politicians, or it may merely mean the scheme of Representative Vreeland for injecting elasticity into the currency.

Reports that the Hon. Tim Woodruff and the Hon. Charles Murphy have got together in an alliance to defeat Governor Hughes on the racing legislation, suggest that this is a good time for people who want that legislation to start shouting for another term for Hughes as governor.

The torpedoing of the President's battleship plan seems to have been accomplished.

Maybe they put that item for cows in the naval bill, on the theory that it would be a good scheme to let the sailors learn to milk something besides the Treasury.

The treaty fixing the boundary line between the United States and Canada has been assured of ratification. They will next prepare to place monuments along the line so that in future there shall be no question about its location. It is contended by the New York Symphony Orchestra at the New National Theater next Sunday evening at 8:15.

Walter Damrosch will conduct the orchestra, this being his second appearance in Washington this season. The ticketed audience will be admitted to the orchestra at 7:30 p. m. The box office of the theater will be open at 1 o'clock Sunday afternoon.

MONA MACREE.

Mona Macree, I'm the Sardinian creature now.

Over the sea, but a lover of Nature, now.

Careless and free.

Nature, the goddess of myriad graces, Fours for love lovers a balm that effaces.

Scars from the heart, in these smiling new places.

Far to the eastward as far to the south of you.

Sweet are the grapes that she gives me to eat.

Red are her pomegranates, luscious and sweet.

Dreamy the breath of her flowers in the heat.

But O! the red mouth of you, Mona Macree!

Mona Macree, though it's here that the money is.

Rather for me.

Dreams in drowsed ravens through blooms where the honey is.

Wild as a bee.

She, the new goddess to whom I'm beholden.

Shares me in days that are scented an golden.

Even as the tresses your temples enfolden.

Aye! za! the b'ne, when the sun has forsaken it.

Blossoms with jewels, night-lamps in her throne.

Bright as two passionless eyes I have known.

Ah! it is here that my heart is my own.

But O! the dull ache in it.

Mona Macree!

—A. Daly, in Catholic Standard and Times.

SQUEAKY SHOES IN DEMAND.

Small automatic pumps, very ingeniously contrived, sprang into being between the layers of the soles of each finished pair of shoes.

"That beats me," said the visitor. "I never saw air put in shoe soles before. Pneumatic like that, are they springs?"

"No, they're air," answered the foreman of the Lynn factory. "These go to the factory for the export trade. They go to Africa. A native African judges the white man's shoes by their squeak. The louder they squeak the finer the article. In fact, the native won't wear a non-squeaking, silent shoe. It is wind between the soles that makes shoes squeak. Put in enough and your footgear will be as noisy as two pigs under a fence. We by adding this cheap wind to our product increase its value more than hand-squeezing throughout would."—New York Press.

March Circulation Figures

Net Daily Average:

The Times.....46,306

Increase Over February, 1,486

The Star.....38,441

Decrease From February, 528.

The Association of American Advertisers

has examined and certified to the circulation of this publication. The detail report of such examination is on file at the New York office of the Association. No other figures of circulation guaranteed.

No. 21.

Secretary.

Coming Next Week To the Theaters

Kellar, insisting that this will mark his parting visit to Washington prior to his retirement next spring in favor of Howard Thurston, his co-star this season, comes to the Columbia Theater Monday night for one week. Mr. Kellar has reached the age when the fruits of his long and successful career can be best enjoyed in retirement, and the end of the present tour will mark the close of his professional activity. His present co-star and successor, Thurston, is said to have made rapid strides in his chosen field during the past few years.

OPERA AT NATIONAL.

Next week the Aborn Opera Company will return to the New National Theater with Bizet's last and greatest grand opera composition, "Carmen," as the offering for the eight performances of the week. Among the favorites of former Aborn presentations to be included in the list for the coming week are Edith Bradford as Carmen, the fascinating but capricious Spanish cigarette girl; Harry Luckstone as Escamillo, the dandy of the bull ring, and Sallie Orsini, who will be well placed as the angelic Michaela. Two different tenors of note in opera circles will be heard in the role of Don Jose, Henry Barron and Domenico Russo. The prices for this year will be the same as last, with the usual school children's matinee Wednesday, with all seats at 25 cents.

LASKY SPECTACLE AT CHASE'S.

Chase's next week will provide a program including the Jesse L. Lasky spectacle, "A Night on a House Boat," the Six American Dancers, Inez Macaulay and company, the Casting Dancers, Sam Williams, Fields and Ward, Prince Kokin, and the color pictures "Picturesque Scenes in Morocco."

"NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND."

Clever construction, bright lines, strong dramatic situations and climaxes and a masterly blending of pathos and comedy are said to be the chief features of Owen Davis' latest melodrama, "It's Never Too Late to Mend," or "The Wanderer's Return." It is story of life in a great city with New York for its particular locale. The story is complete in itself, while those who have all been taken from life and woven together into a dramatic fabric. It is presented in fourteen scenes and comes to the New Academy next Monday evening.

CAMERAPHONE AT MAJESTIC.

Next week at the Majestic something entirely new and different will be introduced for the amusement of admirers of moving pictures. Manager Weston has secured the Washington rights of the Cameraphone, a combination of the phonograph and moving picture machine. With this machine it is possible to reproduce life-size objects in talking, walking, singing, or dancing. Continuous news will be given from 11 a. m. to 11 p. m.

NORDICA-DAMROSCH.

Madame Lillian Nordica, the famous grand opera prima donna, late of the Metropolitan Grand Opera Company, will be the special soloist at the concert to be given by the New York Symphony Orchestra at the New National Theater next Sunday evening at 8:15.

Walter Damrosch will conduct the orchestra, this being his second appearance in Washington this season. The ticketed audience will be admitted to the orchestra at 7:30 p. m. The box office of the theater will be open at 1 o'clock Sunday afternoon.

MASK AND WIG CLUB.

The Mask and Wig Club of the University of Pennsylvania will give one performance of "Uncle Sam's Ditch" at the Belasco Thursday evening, April 23.

The "Wiggers" show this year is a two-act comedy, dealing with affairs in the isthmus of Panama. Three specialties are included in the program: a dance of French maids and art students, a Russian dance, with very effective costumes, and a Russian dance. In the second act there will also be a burlesque on "The Doll's House" as played by Madam Nazimova.

HOFMANN-KREISLER RECITAL.

The joint appearance of Josef Hofmann, pianist, and Fritz Kreisler, violinist, will take place tomorrow afternoon at the Columbia Theater at 4:30 o'clock.

The appearance of these two artists, at their concert in New York last Saturday, has been the signal for the greatest enthusiasm, their playing being superb. The music devotees of this city are to be congratulated that they are to hear these two great artists together as their present tour only embraces twenty-five concerts, of which three are to be given in New York.

"STAR SHOW GIRLS," LYCEUM.

The "Star Show Girls," in the latest musical comedy, "Streets of Cairo," will be seen at the New Lyceum next week.

A number of unique features and clever electrical and stage effects are promised. Among the funmakers are Charles H. Brown, Harry Henshaw, Little Livingston, and others. The absurdity is entitled "The Main Gazebo."

"RUNAWAY GIRLS" AT GAYETY.

Clark's "Runaway Girls Company," which opens its engagement here Monday night at the Gayety Theater is said to be one of the best extravaganza companies on the road.

The company is made up of some well-known vaudeville and burlesque people. Among them are Georgia Cunningham, a songstress; Milton Schuster, Harry Smith, Frank Fox, Frank Fox, George Puget, Harry Henshaw, Little Livingston, and others. The absurdity is entitled "The Main Gazebo."

WORKS FOR SIXTY YEARS WITHOUT MISSING A DAY

NEW YORK, April 23.—Charles H. Schermerhorn, the oldest telegrapher in point of service in New Jersey, celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday anniversary yesterday. He has worked as a telegrapher for sixty years without having been off duty a single day. He is hale and happy and declares that he intends to keep at work for a quarter of a century more.

He became a telegrapher in 1848 at New Hope, Pa., and after managing the Brooklyn telegraph office for 1868 was transferred to Beverly, N. J., where he worked during the civil war. In 1870 he became manager of the Western Union office in Padfield, and has been acting as such ever since.

"I don't take any stock in these diet theories," said Schermerhorn yesterday. "Just be happy and don't worry, and you will live to be a hundred."

ANOTHER OLDEST BOOK.

Another owner of the "oldest" book in the city has been found in the person of J. J. Tucker, who has a copy of the "Mariner's Compass," written and published at Philadelphia in 1728. This book, written by Andrew Wakely, was bought by Tucker's grandfather at a sale made by Henry Molleson in Philadelphia in 1745.

Marriage of Miss Alta M. Jenkins to Mr. Leiter to Wed

Paul Y. Waters Last Night Easter Season Feature.

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